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**Local Roads & Streets Council**  
Advisory to the Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation

# Quarterly Newsletter

## Message from the WisDOT Secretary



*Terry Mulcahy,  
WisDOT Secretary*

It is my pleasure in this inaugural newsletter to recognize the unique and highly valued partnership that exists between Wisconsin's state and local transportation leaders. This quarterly publication will serve as a vital link in keeping all of us up to date as we pursue the common goal of maintaining and enhancing Wisconsin's top-notch transportation network.

This state-local partnership was highlighted by the creation of the Local Roads and Streets Council (LRSC) in 1995. The LRSC serves an important function by bringing together local transportation officials, their associations, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) on ways to improve the local roads network. I am very pleased with the amount of cooperation and hard work the Council has put forth, and I look forward to continuing and strengthening this partnership into the future.

This past summer, the LRSC was asked to address the Governor's Blue Ribbon Commission on State-Local Partnerships (Kettl Commission). As a result, transportation was praised for its cooperative approach towards solving current and future challenges. The Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR) project—a groundbreaking initiative recommended by the Council—was highlighted as a superior example of visionary thinking.

Another outstanding benefit of the LRSC has been the ability of the various local members and their associations to repeatedly come together to identify common transportation problems and recommend common solutions. This collaboration has strengthened the Council's recommendations and bodes well for the future.

*"Secretary"—continued on page 4*

## Message from the Council Chair



*LRSC Chair Rick Jones,  
Commissioner of Public Works,  
City of Racine*

I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to serve as chairperson of the Local Roads and Streets Council (LRSC). The LRSC consists of representatives of towns, villages, cities, counties, regional planning agencies, Commissioners of Public Works, and WisDOT staff. This group advises the Secretary of WisDOT on issues that impact the local roadway system. The partnership between WisDOT and

local governments is important, as it recognizes the fact that all of us are the trustees of Wisconsin's statewide roadway network, which includes local streets, town roads, county highways, state highways, and the interstate system. The commitment to continued maintenance and improvement of this system enhances the safety and economic well being of our local communities and our state as a whole. I commend the Secretary for his continued recognition of the value that this state-local partnership approach brings to our statewide roadway system.

During the last five years, under the leadership of Emmer Shields (Ashland County Highway Commissioner) and Bill Handlos (Director of Public Works, City of Manitowoc), the LRSC advised the Secretary on many issues. LRSC recommendations included the need to create a statewide local road database—the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), changes in the General Transportation Aids (GTA) Program to improve accountability, and recommendations on how to streamline the delivery of federally-funded state/local roadway projects.

*"Council Chair"—continued on page 4*

## December 15, 2001 Deadline Reminder To Local Officials



Recently enacted State Statute 86.302 (2) requires municipalities and counties to assess the physical condition of their local roadways and submit the information to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation by December 15, 2001 and biennially thereafter. This rating information will be input into WISLR and, along with other inventory data, will help local governments and the state improve decision making.

WisDOT has developed several tools to assist you in submitting this pavement rating data in an efficient manner. WisDOT is working closely with the University of Wisconsin—Transportation Information Center (UW-TIC) to upgrade PASERWARE, a pavement

software package to assist in the electronic transfer of pavement data. For communities that do not use PASERWARE, WisDOT has developed a spreadsheet (in either Microsoft Excel or hardcopy format) to help you catalog and transmit information to WisDOT.

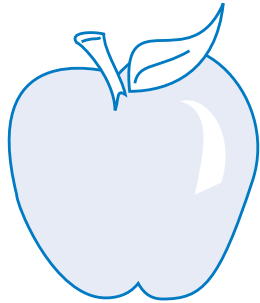
A letter was recently sent to the chief elected official in each city, village, and town, along with county board chairs and highway commissioners, reminding them of this impending deadline. The letter also provided contact information to obtain the PASERWARE download or appropriate spreadsheet. WisDOT is working hard to provide you with information to help you meet the December 15, 2001 deadline.

## WISLR to be Launched in August



The Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR), a database on local roads in the state, will be launched in August 2001. WISLR was recommended for development by the LRSC and their associations to provide convenient access to data via the Web and to support local decision-making. WISLR will store the physical attribute data on roadways that local communities are now required to collect and report. WISLR data will identify local road conditions and the system will include several reporting and mapping functions. For WISLR questions, contact Kelly Schieldt at 608.267.9748 or [kelly.schieldt@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:kelly.schieldt@dot.state.wi.us).

## WISLR Training Course Coming This Summer



WisDOT has hired a training consultant to help provide classes on how to use WISLR. We are busy developing an effective curriculum and convenient schedule of sessions. Local units of government can attend these classes during the summer of 2001 to learn how to enter data, run standard reports and use the mapping functions within WISLR. Training materials are being developed and will be distributed at these training sessions. Watch for more information coming soon.

### News from the Front Lines: Committee and Subcommittee Reports

	Executive Committee	Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative (REAL) Subcommittee	Local Transportation Funding Study Group	Education and Communication Subcommittee
Chairperson	Mary Forlenza, Bureau of Transit and Local Roads, WisDOT	Emmer Shields Ashland County Highway Commissioner	Tom Boguszewski Rock County Highway Commissioner	Don Kush, Transportation Planner West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Role	The Executive Committee is not a replacement for full Council actions – rather, this group has the ability to move quickly on timely issues, which are then brought before the full LRSC. In addition, the Executive Committee meets with the WisDOT Secretary's Office annually, and is meeting quarterly with WisDOT modal leadership on issues of mutual interest.	This group leads the effort in monitoring legislative or statutory changes that impact local transportation. Continual oversight on the part of REAL with regard to legislative and bureaucratic action keeps local transportation officials current and informed.	The group's objective to determine the most effective ways to administer the General Transportation Aids program remains at the top of its agenda. This effort is committed to making improvements in GTA cost containment and cost effectiveness. The study group will also address broader issues of transportation funding as opportunities arise.	The Committee's focus is on educational and outreach efforts regarding local roads and streets in the state of Wisconsin. In addition, the Committee focuses on facilitating the free-flow of information and communication among all local transportation stakeholders.
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide leadership</li><li>- Prioritize and focus Council efforts</li><li>- Ensure consistent message across Council activities</li><li>- Serve as focal point for WisDOT interaction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Perform in-depth analysis and review of relevant legislative and policy changes</li><li>- Determine the impact of those changes on local units of government</li><li>- Review regulatory changes early in their development</li><li>- Communicate information about legislative and policy changes to LRSC members</li><li>- Cooperate with appropriate state and federal agencies to address local government concerns regarding local roads</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Clarify GTA policy goals</li><li>- Determine whether GTA formula and structures are working effectively</li><li>- Monitor GTA formula and structures for continued effectiveness</li><li>- Make recommendations to increase cost containment and cost effectiveness with regard to GTA</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Developing recommendations for communication among stakeholders</li><li>- Designing education and outreach programs for local transportation officials</li><li>- Providing LRSC members with current information regarding local transportation issues</li></ul>
2001 Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Successful implementation of WISLR</li><li>- Active participation in developing local consensus around the future of funding transportation</li><li>- Cooperation with WisDOT business areas impacting local communities</li><li>- Expanded awareness of the LRSC and its activities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Discussion of impact of NR 151 Nonpoint Pollution Rules</li><li>- Attention to issues concerning wetlands around the state</li><li>- Determination of the impact of the recent federal Supreme Court ruling in <i>Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. Army Corp of Engineers</i> on wetland management and local transportation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Address recommendations that were submitted but not included in the final 1999-2001 State Biennial budget and ensure that those issues are reconsidered for the 2001-2003 budget</li><li>- Continue exploration of ways to build greater accountability into the GTA</li><li>- Coordinate efforts with associations to get the GTA purpose statement back into the budget process</li><li>- Begin exploration of alternative methods for funding local road and street maintenance and construction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Completion of PASER and PASERWARE training for all interested parties</li><li>- Education and outreach for local officials regarding WISLR system</li><li>- Development of an LRSC website</li></ul>

The new year has brought with it a transition into new governmental administrations at both the federal and state levels. Our department looks forward to working with Wisconsin Governor Scott McCallum and his staff to continue providing the high quality transportation services state residents have come to expect. We recognize that new leadership means new ideas, new ways of thinking and new possibilities. We are excited about partnering with our state, local and federal officials on initiatives that will enhance our transportation system.

Just as our department must be held accountable in how we allocate resources, local governments must be mindful of the need for heightened accountability in any new or existing transportation program. With the tightening of the economy in recent months, and the subsequent effect on state and local budgets, it's imperative governments at all levels be ever vigilant about how limited resources are utilized. At the same time, we look forward to working with our local government partners on innovative ways to fund Wisconsin's comprehensive transportation needs. I encourage LRSC members to search for creative funding solutions upon which all local partners can agree.

Again, I want to thank you for your hard work and dedication over the last few years. Together, we're making tremendous progress and I look forward to building upon our valuable partnership as we address tomorrow's transportation challenges.

Terry Mulcahy, Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

### **Would you prefer to receive this newsletter via e-mail?**

You may request that the LRSC Quarterly Newsletter be delivered to you *electronically* via e-mail. This is a great way to get the latest LRSC news fast and first! If you are interested, please send an e-mail to Chariti Gent at WisDOT ([chariti.gent@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:chariti.gent@dot.state.wi.us)).

I look forward to the coming year with both anticipation and trepidation. I am very excited about implementation of the WISLR project. WisDOT has allocated extensive resources into developing this statewide local road database. Later this year it will be local governments' turn to step up to the plate by providing pavement condition ratings for each local road segment.

At the same time, the LRSC must join in the challenge to find innovative ways to fund the needs of our transportation system and meet the ever-growing demands of its users. A major challenge looms in funding reconstruction of southeast Wisconsin's freeway system, while maintaining our commitment to highway system needs elsewhere in the state. The LRSC will no doubt play an important role in impacting these critical discussions.

The LRSC functions as a liaison between local governments and the WisDOT Secretary. As your LRSC representative, if you ever have questions or concerns regarding Wisconsin's local road system, I hope you'll feel free to contact me at 262.636.9121 or [rjones@cityofracine.org](mailto:rjones@cityofracine.org).

Rick Jones, LRSC Chairperson  
Commissioner of Public Works, City of Racine

## **LRSC 2001 Meeting Schedule**

May 9  
July 11  
September 12  
November 7

All LRSC meetings are held at the City Council Chambers, Wisconsin Rapids, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please call Jackie Baumgartner at 608.267.0448 for further information.

## **1998-2000 LRSC Biennial Report Is Out!**

The 1998-2000 LRSC Biennial Report is now available. This report provides a comprehensive look at LRSC accomplishments over the last two years and outlines new directions that the LRSC may take in the future.

If you do not already have a copy of this report, please call Chariti Gent 608.266.8165 or e-mail [chariti.gent@dot.state.wi.us](mailto:chariti.gent@dot.state.wi.us) to request one.

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### **If you have questions about the LRSC please contact us.**

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